

**Transforming State Workforce Support Systems:  
Innovations and Lessons Learned from RTT-ELC States**

Allyson Dean: Welcome, everybody, to the National Center on Early Childhood Development Teaching and Learning, our first Spotlight on Innovative Practice webinar. I'm Allyson Dean, the Director of Resource Development for the center. As part of the National Center for Early Childhood Development Teaching and Learning, or DTL, as we like to call ourselves for short, part of our work in the area of early childhood professional development systems will offer two more of these webinars this year. The webinar series is intended to highlight innovative professional development systems work in states across the country. Our hope is that learning from states like Colorado and Rhode Island today will be helpful as state leaders work to meet both the new CCDBG regulations and the new Head Start performance standards, both of which really include a significant focus on professional development of the early childhood workforce.

So, a few housekeeping items before we start. Today's webinar will be recorded and posted to DTL's professional development systems pages, both on the ECLKC and the Early Childhood Educator central sites. We'll also send you a brief feedback form immediately following the webinar electronically, which we'll use to inform the next two spotlight webinars on this topic, so be sure to let us know what you'd like us to focus on. And, of course, during the webinar, if you have questions or comments, we invite you to enter those in the chat box on your computer screen. Today, we'll focus on the work of Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge states. We'll highlight their workforce initiatives, and we'll get to hear from our colleagues in Rhode Island and Colorado about their work in this area. I'm pleased now to turn this over to Kathy Thornburg and Denise Mauzy, who will lead us through our presentation today.

Kathy Thornburg: Thank you, Allyson. Denise and I are happy to talk with you about workforce innovations from the Early Learning Challenge states. First, welcome, of course, to this webinar, which will highlight the workforce-related accomplishments. And then we'll hear... As Allyson mentioned, we'll hear examples from Colorado, Kathleen, and also from Allison in Rhode Island. And here we are. Denise and I work at AEM Corporation. In addition to being a partner at the National Center for Early Childhood Development Teaching and Learning, I work with the Early Learning Challenge technical assistance and the Preschool Development Grant technical assistance. And Denise?

Denise Mauzy: Hello. This is Denise Mauzy. In addition to working for the National Center for Early Childhood Development Teaching and Learning, I also work for The Center for IDEA, early childhood data systems. And we're going to more fully introduce our presenters when they move into their specific content presentations.

Kathy: So, in the first 20 minutes, Denise and I will be sharing examples from 18 states, all but Colorado and Rhode Island since Kathleen and Allison will be sharing later. So hang on there with us because we have lots of great strategies to share. But even though it seems we'll be going so fast, we will have a way for you to see all of these strategies and more thanks to AEM and the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge T.A. team. And at the end of the session, I will tell you how to obtain that information. So you see the 20 states that we would be talking about. And as many of you know, there were two workforce

related areas that states could work on during their four-year Early Learning Challenge grant period. They're listed here. The Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and Progression of Credentials and also Supporting Early Childhood Educators in Improving Their Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities. You can see that of the 20 states, 9 of the states wrote to both of these areas.

Just to give you a taste of -- of what incredible things these states have been doing, we've divided our examples into P.D. support, activities credentials, and so forth. Denise will talk about these, and then I will talk about some higher ed examples before we hear from Kathleen and Allison. Denise? Denise: Thank you, Kathy. The breadth and scope of the work that ELC states have engaged in is really quite impressive. We have categorized the professional development work into the five areas that you see before you on the screen. For each category, I will share one or more state examples, but I really want to note that many states have exciting work in each of these areas. But given our limited time today, we simply cannot review all of their accomplishments, so let's get started. Knowledge and Competency Framework. New Jersey aligns their core knowledge and competencies with other standards, including Birth to Three Early Learning Standards, Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards, Grow New Jersey Kids, and the NAEYC standards. Pennsylvania has developed home visitor core competencies.

The home visitor core competencies include knowledge, skills, and practices that inform and impact the relationship home visiting professionals have with families and promote really a strength-based approach. Maryland is developing a self-reflection tool for childcare professionals to use alongside their core competencies framework. And finally, California created a rubric for mapping the competencies to coursework in P.D. training activities. Because of the breadth of these competencies, they also created a web-based mapping tool so that faculty and P.D. providers are mapping their learning objectives to specific competencies. Next, we will look at professional development. So, in terms of professional development, Georgia has developed a four-tiered approach to professional development called the Georgia Professional Development Hierarchy. It's designed to move Georgia's early childhood educators from the knowledge phase to the high-performing application phase.

The hierarchy starts with a broad audience of groups and awareness level content in tier one and becomes more targeted to early childhood educators teaching students birth to age 5 with focus content that supports higher quality teacher/child interactions in the top tiers. As individuals move from tier to tier, professionals begin applying their knowledge of early learning and development to their own instructional approach with support from coaches and mentors. This approach really responds to the fact that states have to design their professional development to meet professionals at all levels of education and experience. Minnesota and Oregon have done some really exciting work to increase the bilingual trainer capacity in their respective states to respond to the needs of a diverse workforce. Minnesota increased capacity through trainer learning communities.

Three trainers representing eight languages -- eight language communities participated in 2015. Oregon increased the number of trainers within the trainer program that have the ability to train in languages other than English. They recently reported 147 community trainers and 276 master trainers who can train in Spanish, Russian, Chinese, and Vietnamese. And finally, Wisconsin is using coordination coaches to provide critical "air traffic control" at a regional level by coordinating systems development, training,

technical assistance opportunities, and other relevant activities in six regions across the state and through corresponding six regional action teams. Their work increases collaboration. It reduces the redundancies, identifies gaps for further support, and finally helps make the system work more efficiently.

I know we're giving you a lot of great examples, but I want to remind you that we will share a resource link at the end of this session that has a lot more detailed information. Additionally, we want to encourage that if we mention or highlight your state in this section of the presentation and you have more information that you want to post in the chat box, please feel free to do so. But we're going to go ahead and move into the development of credentials. While many states have credential systems in place, we want to share information specifically around Delaware and Pennsylvania. Delaware reported about 1,100 early childhood educators' completion of credentials in areas such as inclusion, infant/toddler, preschool, family child care, administration, and curriculum and assessment. Now, we know this includes many of the credentials implemented by other states, but we are very intrigued by and excited about the curriculum and assessment credential. As this content really is newer within state work, and it responds to the emerging needs in the field. Also, Pennsylvania is building leadership capacity through the peer mentor credential. Peer mentors are currently supporting family childcare providers and center providers to move to higher star levels. This is a unique approach in that it increases leadership capacity.

And I think we would all agree this is really an important, needed capacity within our field. We want to share one example in relation to QRIS and workforce issues and specifically the link to teacher licensure. Massachusetts aligns at QRIS and the educator licensure and P.D. Educators with specified license types will meet the QRIS professional development criteria for active participation in coaching, mentoring, and/or ongoing professional development to improve practice without further verification.

This allows certain portions of the QRIS to not have to be reverified since this work was done ahead of time through educator licensure. And finally, I'm going to talk about councils and conferences. Two examples in relation to councils and conferences, the first from Kentucky. Kentucky offers low cost to free training to address needs via community early childhood councils, regional Ready Kids conferences, early childhood leadership academies. The academies include coaching and professional learning communities. And Delaware offers a pre-k to first grade Stronger Together conference. It really is exciting to see the connection or the bridge from early childhood and into k-1. Okay, so I'm going to now turn it over to Kathy, who is going to talk with us about higher education strategies.

Kathy: Thanks, Denise. We've divided the higher ed strategies into these three categories. First, the structural issues. Most states worked closely with their colleges and universities. The one example that I want to share comes from Illinois. Their initiative is known, and it's a pretty long name, known as the Early Childhood Educator Preparation Program Innovation Grant. In the first two years of the program, approximately 70 2- and 4-year institutions developed partnerships. And after this year, almost all of their programs will have been included in this initiative. Outcomes include course-by-course articulation, cross-institution advising, professional development micro module, and revising coursework to embed the bilingual ELS endorsement through the standard teacher preparation pathways. I thought it was also

innovative that Illinois developed a higher ed Website for faculty, and it includes articles and publications, Websites, blogs, videos, research, classroom activities, and much more. We've all worried about articulate -- articulation agreements over time. Several states had higher ed summits. Ohio's summit, for example, looked at articulation agreements and how to use the competencies in higher ed classes. Michigan had two summits, and the primary topic of discussion was improving articulation agreements, again, between their community colleges and universities. Washington adopted statewide stackable certificates in early childhood.

This was a three-stage stackable certificate including consistent course numbers and credentials that build on each other, provide transferable credits, and led to a one-year state credential. The stackable certificates allow for a smooth transition for students interested in progressing to a two-year degree in early childhood. And their first was offered in a variety of formats, but was also available in English, Spanish, and Somali. And then in Maryland, 2- and 4-year faculty worked to provide more dual certification programs in special ed and general ed, birth to third grade. Now I'll share some strategies related to course development. New Mexico's worked hard to improve their field experiences for college students. They've developed a process for certifying professional mentor teachers. All states have to deal with practicum placements and cooperating teachers' incentives supervision, their clinical supervision, faculty supervision, and more. So I think it'll be interesting to follow what New Mexico is doing in this area. North Carolina developed a course on coaching, mentoring, and technical assistance. The success of this course led to a decision to develop a graduate-level three-semester credit course titled The Art and Science of Early Childhood Coaching, Mentoring, and Technical Assistance. Most states worked with higher ed institutions on embedding their competencies into their coursework. One example comes from Minnesota. To assist their higher eds in this, they developed an RFP. And the grant supported three pairs of two and four-year programs as they worked to integrate the competencies into their courses.

Another example comes from Pennsylvania, where all accredited Pennsylvania colleges and universities that offer early childhood or childhood development degrees or certificates were invited to submit applications for a competitive grant, as well. And this was to align their coursework with their core competencies. They had 18 2-year and 4-year institutions representing all regions of the state that got these mini grants. These efforts resulted in over 300 early childhood courses now aligned to their core competencies. I know folks from these states would be happy to share more in-depth information, and in addition, much of this information would be on their Websites. And finally, in relation to higher ed, the access to higher ed, of course, is crucial to increase the professionalism of our workforce.

Many states provided financial awards for teachers to attend college, but I want to mention two specific examples. New Mexico reached out to their early educators who really weren't typical college students. This was with their T.E.A.C.H. scholarship in different parts of the state. They gave over 1,000 T.E.A.C.H. scholarships, and in their state, approximately 60% went to Hispanic teachers. And then they also had Native American, Black, Asian, and others. The Vermont Child Care Industry & Career Council has used the support of this grant to expand the availability of a series of six three-credit college courses that they require for their Vermont Child Care Apprenticeship Program. They were able to add three additional courses to what they had. Their apprentices document 4,000 hours of supervised on-the-job training.

And they complete the sequence of the six tuition-free college courses, participate in additional community-based trainings to gain the knowledge and skills needed to be effective.

There are more states working in this area, but I did want to share what New Mexico and Vermont because I thought they had great examples. And then moving on, Massachusetts has developed a road map for supporting adults who are English language learners and want to attend college. They wanted to create a system across higher ed to bridge this for ELL educators, to prepare them for college-level courses taught in English, and then, of course, to provide all the content knowledge that they need to be effective teachers and working with children and family. And one last innovation in higher ed that I want to tell you about today. Maryland established a statewide job board to advertise internships and paid positions designed to enhance childcare providers' efforts to find qualified applicants. So I'm sure other states will want to learn more about these strategies, but we do have two folks we want to hear from.

And first, we want to hear from Colorado. Kathleen DeVries has more than 30 years of experience in early childhood. Her involvement in the field includes preschool and elementary teaching, consulting, mentoring, and teaching at a community college. In addition, she served as discipline chair during our NAEYC accreditation of early childhood departments and participated in the development of their early childhood professional development plan and early childhood competencies framework. Currently, she manages the Professional Development Information System and works with 2- and 4-year colleges and universities to establish competency-based articulation agreements. Now we get to hear more about Colorado. Thank you, Kathleen, for being with us.

Kathleen DeVries: Thank you, Kathy. I appreciate the opportunity. Colorado was really fortunate when they started the Race to the Top work. They had this plan in place to guide their work on professional development. It was developed in 2009 and provides a blueprint for action. It includes several innovations, which inform the specific goals and objectives within the plan. A couple of examples here. One is the establishment of a research-based, tiered set of competencies which serves as the foundation for all early childhood professional preparation and ongoing professional development. Another example is the development of a new quality assurance and accountability mechanism to ensure the effectiveness of college preparation as well as ongoing professional development, which leads to the effectiveness of early learning professionals.

These innovative ideas really helped to form the goals, like adoption of that set of competencies and using the competencies as the basis for credentialing and approve professional development programs, including early childhood teacher preparation programs at the colleges and universities. It also helped to inform the objective around development of an online, interactive web-based clearing house, which has a variety of resources to support professionals advancing along the career lattice. The two statements you see on your screen now really reflect the larger vision within the plan. And these have been the main focus of implementing the workforce component of Colorado's Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge grant.

The purpose is to ensure positive outcomes for children and families, to align them, support ongoing professional development, and serve as a way to collect and understand data around early learning

professionals across the state. One of the two broad goals listed on the last slide and the main focus for our work, they connect and overlap with all the goals specified in the professional development plan. We've talked about the competencies. Enhancing recruitment and retention is certainly a goal. Ongoing career and skill development. Financing through public and existing funds. Data collection and analysis of early learning professionals. I have to have say, before this, we had absolutely no mechanism to collect data on our workforce. Create accountability mechanisms, and finally, Goal 7, which is ECLC, which is the Early Childhood Leadership Commission oversight and their commission, appointed by the governor, which oversees all the early childhood initiatives across the state.

These four elements that you see on this slide are really the bucket -- buckets of work within our portion of Colorado's Race to the Top work. And if you look at the early childhood competencies framework, there's now a revised early childhood professional credential, a revised trainer and training approval system, as well as higher education alignment to the early childhood competencies. Within the Professional Development Information System, which we refer to as PDIS, there's a competency-based learning management system and a registry that collects the data.

And it includes a competency self-assessment that informs an individualized professional development plan as well as a system to manage and issue credential applications online. A real plus of this system is that it can add multiple competency sets and credentials. Right now, we're working on implementing the coaching credential, the trainer credential, and in the future, we'll be looking at an inclusion credential, infant toddler credential, and a home visitor credential. Incentives and scholarships. We have quite a bit of money that we invested here. And all that money was focused on recruitment and retention in high-needs areas. And finally, the statewide coaching network, and it was aligned to Colorado's coaching competencies. It includes a coaching credential, relationship-based professional development training, and ongoing reflective supervision supports. Colorado's Early Childhood Professional credential is a major component in our overall system. It provides formal recognition of education, training, experience, and competency. It's included as a part of the human services code. It's part of our state's quality rating and improvement system. It's included in center-based childcare licensing rules and regulations. And that online application and administration is done automatically then through PDIS.

If you look at the goals on the left, you will see that this new Colorado Early Childhood credential was created to increase access and achievability across the early childhood workforce as well as provide support to increase professional expertise and share workforce information with Colorado Shines QRIS. With these goals in mind, we've set forth a process to ensure that the credential aligns with the early childhood educator and administrator competencies and is based on what research demonstrates is most effective in preparing early childhood professionals to provide quality interactions for young children. Oops. Went one too far, here. There we go. This is a graphic that we use a lot. This is the graphic that represents the workings of our professional credential. You can see there are four elements that feed into the credential.

Beginning with formal education, we really looked at what research tells us about what actually makes a qualified early childhood professional. In formal education, it's degrees and degrees of any kind, so

professionals get points for their highest degree obtained. We know, too, that the area of study is important, and if it's an area related to early childhood education, they get additional points. We also know that some people continue after a degree to take coursework, or some people just take courses and don't continue all the way to a degree. But we know if that coursework is early childhood related, it's important, so we count that coursework, as well. For professional development, we award points for clock hours and CEUs over the last three years. We also award additional points in professional development related to children with high needs or those completed as a series because research says that that is far more valuable.

And finally, what we all know is true is that training with at least eight hours of additional coaching is extremely valuable, so we award additional points for that. We also award points for additional licenses, endorsements, and certificates that people earn. The place where you actually put all that together is in your experience, so take your formal education, take your professional development, and you implement it through experience. So we're awarding points up to a certain level for experience, as well. And finally, the last area, demonstrated competencies, we're very excited about this. We're about to start our pilot on demonstrated competencies.

So, using a research-based tool that demonstrates your competency, such as a class observation, maybe an ERS observation, something along that line, and we're piloting that towards the end of the year this year. Oops. Okay. So PDIS, or the Professional Development Information System, is our online support system for professional development, and all the components of this system connect to Colorado's Early Childhood Competencies for educators and administrators. For example, when a professional enters into the registry, they identify their competency-based role, and when they choose a goal for professional development, they receive course and training recommendations in their professional development plan based on their self-identified competency gaps from the self-assessment and the competency supported by each of the professional development activities. So each part of the system is connected to competencies, and they all work together to support that individual. This is our technical diagram from our state, and I just wanted to very briefly kind of show you how this works. This is our licensing database, so all the early childhood licensed programs go from there into our Quality Rating and Information System on a nightly basis. And from there, they go into the Professional Development Information System on a nightly basis. That's where individual professionals connect themselves to a program. And then the QRIS system actually has the capability of doing a poll at any time they like to pull critical data elements from the workforce into that system for quality-rating purposes. So it's really a highly interactive system. The QRIS is also related to the Quality Initiative System that awards quality initiative grants, and we have work underway to make the integration between the Professional Development System and the QRIS system, as well. So while we've accomplished a lot in the last couple of years, we're setting new targets. And through participation as a Cohort 2 state for implementing, transforming the workforce, we're going to take that opportunity to update our TB system plan and set new goals and continue to strengthen our system. We're in the beginning stages of this work and very excited to have the opportunity to continue to move forward. And that's what I have.

Denise: Great. Thank you so much, Kathleen. We do want to just take an opportunity. We had a question in the chat box, and I thought while we are still on the content for Colorado, we might want to

allow you to address that. Elaine Wilson has asked the following question. "Is QRIS required to use the quality assessment?"

Kathleen: The quality assessment. So there's a self-assessment, a competency...

Denise: I'm assuming it's the self-assessment, yes.

Kathleen: Okay. Okay. So, no, they are not until the higher levels. So we have an integrated licensing and quality rating system at a level one or a level two. The professional does not have to complete the self-assessment at a level three through five. In the rating system, yes, they do have to complete the self-assessment.

Denise: Okay. And we have -- we have other questions coming in, but I'm going to hold those questions, and we're going to go ahead and move into Rhode Island to make sure that we have an opportunity for Rhode Island to share their information. But Kathleen, we're going to circle back around so that we can address those questions, as well, at the end of the presentation.

Kathleen: Great.

Denise: All right. So it's my pleasure to introduce Allison Comport from Rhode Island. Allison works for the Rhode Island Department of Education, managing the state's preschool development grants as well as supporting its Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge grant. Allison has worked in Arizona, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island supporting development and implementation of system components, including state quality rating and improvement systems, a workforce registry, early learning and development standards, a wages and compensation program, several professional development and technical assistance projects, family engagement efforts, as well as a variety of community engagement campaigns. Thank you, Allison, for sharing with us today, and we look forward to hearing about Rhode Island.

Allison Comport: Thank you, and hi, everyone. So I'm going to begin. I'd like to just kind of set the frame for... Under our Race to the Top grant, we branded all of the work that we've done across the five state agencies by the logo that you'll see on this slide, Exceed. And I'm going to refer you guys back to that upon the conclusion of my section, as well, but for time's sake, let me move forward. So I wanted to start off by sharing a little bit about our Workforce knowledge and competency documents, which were developed between 2013 and 2014. I've listed all of the documents on the slide. I think for purposes of today, the ones that I'd really like to highlight are our workforce knowledge and competencies for P.D. providers and higher education faculty and staff as well as our teacher and early intervention competency documents because you'll see that throughout all of the workforce information that I share today that we had a very comprehensive approach in terms of conceptualizing our workforce, and we really wanted to make sure we include all of the professional working programs that support children's learning and development.

And so we had a very collaborative approach to developing all of these documents. You'll also see on this slide that there's some EI compendium. The EI competencies that are in the document that's



referenced in the first bullet are really around development and learning. The compendium document focuses on specific EI documentation and requirements for their program. One thing that we're really proud of having done in Rhode Island is developed a very comprehensive, aligned professional development system. Through the grants, we established a centralized, what we call, center for early learning professionals. The grantee for this work is EDC based in Massachusetts. And through the work of Race to the Top, we have been able to provide free and aligned professional development to all of the fields. The professional development is built off of a couple of basic assumptions, including adults that are goal oriented, they are internally motivated, and they need opportunities to draw upon their own life experiences. Now, keep in mind, Rhode Island is a very small state, but I'm happy to share that the center has not only provided professional development across the state, but they've also provided technical assistance and implemented several waves of quality improvement grants. So we have 74 professional development topics which have been offered both for English and Spanish speakers.

We have also implemented, in collaboration with the center, a P.D. approval process, which... The P.D. approval process is that any P.D. provider can submit an application for their course to be approved. It has to be aligned to the competencies that I had mentioned on the previous slide. It also needs to be aligned to our Early Learning and development standards, and it needs to be aligned to the quality rating continuum, so to our QRIS standards and our comprehensive approval standards, which is the icon that you see on this slide. So the number of approvals, we've had 483 approved P.D. courses in the state, which is a 91 percent acceptance rate. Sometimes, entities who submit have to go back, and they have to demonstrate stronger alignment and/or more current research and resources which are used to inform the course. The big incentive in having P.D. approved through the center is that P.D.-approved courses are required for licensing so they meet the minimum of 20 hours per year. So the next one, next bullet is that we also have developed and revised a very comprehensive standard curriculum family engagement and child assessment professional development series, which has been housed within the Rhode Island Department of Education. And we are continuing to work collaboratively, the Department of Education, with the center in terms of implementing and offering those courses to the field. What we did under the Race to the Top grant is that when we revised our Early Learning and development standards in 2013 and then had subsequently come out with new regulations and standards, the proper quality rating and continuum and, additionally, competencies, we ensured that all of the courses that were on standard curriculum and instruction were aligned to all of these documents, as well. We've also offered three different cohorts in terms of our training of trainers. So, a little bit of a background in terms of our state is that many of the consultants who have offered professional development have been either full-time staff from the center or have been consultants or independent contractors who subsequently submitted for approval.

The Rhode Island Department of Education also offers a training of trainers on its standards and curriculum courses that I had previously mentioned because we really have a strong focus on fidelity of implementation. So under the Race to the Top grant, we were able to contract with Child Trends to do an evaluation of that training-of-trainer process. So both in terms of the participants or practitioners' experience attending the courses and then also the support for trainers that are part of this network. And many of the trainers who implement the Rhode Island Department of Education courses are also

center staff, as well. Another thing that we're really excited about under the grants is that we've done a lot of work around developing differentiated pathways, so we've really tried to build out our online access points. So, for example, the Center for Early Learning Professionals uses online technology in order to be able to have touch points with their participants in between courses and to be able to continue discussion aside from when the group is meeting face to face in multi-session courses.

We've also done some work collaborating with one of our institutes of higher education to utilize their Blackboard license in order to offer a hybrid model for several of our courses, as well. The next one, we have done some more recent work towards the end of the grants, and this is going to be completed by December. Since we're a Tier I state, our grant will be ending in the next couple of months. So we're doing some work around supporting the pre-k to k standards alignment. So we're currently in the process of developing a course that will align early learning and development standards and provide support and kind of some background from practitioners to the common core and NGSS science standards.

So that's something that's also been developed. We have also developed professional development courses and subsequently alignment documents for our early intervention and family visiting practitioners in the field, as well. So we used Race to the Top dollars to fund an alignment of the early learning and development standards to the Parents as Teachers curricula as well as the Watch Me Grow curricula. Those resources are available in public for the field. We have also worked with our high school career and technical education program to do a dual enrollment kind of certificate credential that's embedded within their program where students, before they graduate, can receive an early learning and development standard certificate prior to graduation, which is a credential that helps them to be more employable when they're seeking opportunities in the workforce because along the quality continuum at the higher levels, you have to demonstrate documentation of having the certificate. Another thing that we did is that we developed a contextualized ESOL and Spanish GED course. And the development of that was then formed by an initial workforce survey that we did that had demonstrated that 23 percent of our Spanish-speaking childcare population had less than a high school credential.

So the development of that was based on the 2014 GED series. And I'm happy to say that that has been sustained by the Workforce Investment Opportunities Act funding within the state, so we'll definitely be moving forward. And that cohort began in 2015. We've also done a lot of work with our post-secondary institutions. And again, being a small state, we have really three primary institutions that we worked with: The Community College of Rhode Island, the University of Rhode Island, and Rhode Island College. So we worked with, first and foremost, CCRI to achieve any accreditation for its associate's degree program. In March 2015, reviewers came to the state to -- and, you know, completed the process, and we were very happy that the program was -- did receive its accreditation. We found that the process was really beneficial because it was great to be able to have an objective and external review of the program as well as for CCRI to engage in a self-study in order to be able to improve its courses and offerings for students. We also worked with all institutions to do alignments of their program of study to the workforce knowledge and competency documents as well as the early learning and development standards.

And so we've published... We've gotten internally reports and also alignment templates from that work. And what resulted in that was that we were able to find opportunities within these programs of study to potentially augment or enhance existing courses to develop additional courses as well as we were able to embed the previous certificate that I had mentioned related to the early learning and development standards within these programs of study so that when students graduate, they don't subsequently have to attend a secondary professional development offering. But upon graduation, they'll be able to receive their certificate that they need to be able to be employed in a high-quality program. Rhode Island College did work with ZERO TO THREE related to enhancing the number of infant/toddler course offerings that it had. We saw overall across our institutions of higher education that we had programs that really had been previously designed for more traditional students, so students that were coming out of high school. We really needed to be able to offer additional differentiated options as well as coursework in infants and toddlers and additional leadership and administration courses. So work under Race to the Top has supported all of those efforts. One thing that Rhode Island College did was that they developed what we call the Institute for Teaching and Learning. This institute takes a cohort model to enrollment and offers hybrid courses for students moved through concurrently together, completing their program of study in order to obtain their bachelor's degree.

And originally, the program began initially offering preschool and pre-k content and subsequently will now be offering this fall the infant/toddler bachelor's of study, as well. So all of these institutes of higher ed, as I mentioned before, did alignments across the programs of study. And we've been able to see that there's definitely some new offerings that speak to the current research that we have in the field and what we know that our practitioners need to be successful in their classroom. Another piece of work that we did is that we developed coordinated data systems. So one component of this is that we just launched around the new year our workforce registry. The workforce registry is a component of really a broader data system that we call ECEDS, the Early Care and Education Data System, in this state. It includes also what we call the program portal, and one of the exciting things about this is that the program portal and the broader Early Care and Education Data System can be used to submit applications for DCYS, our quality rating and improvement continuum, which we call BrightStars in Rhode Island. And then also, it's the purple box on the graphic that you see on this slide. Our comprehensive approval standard, which is a requirement for all of our state and federally funded pre-k classrooms, as well.

So by participants completing their workforce registries and ensuring that they have accurate and up-to-date accounts, they're then able to share the information that's required for each of those regulatory entities to be able to submit it with their renewal applications. So it's definitely a huge incentive in terms of garnering their participation. As I mentioned before, our workforce registry is incredibly new, so what we're planning on doing is towards... We're going to be releasing our workforce report using the data by the end of the Race to the Top grant. We also did work with the Center for Early Learning Professionals mentioned previously to implement what we call technology support. So the center was our primary grantee for implementing, additionally, quality improvement awards. They awarded 530 before the end of the grants, which totaled over \$6 million. But we also determined that aside from just general quality improvement grants that what would be really beneficial in supporting use of this early are and

education data is technology support. So that included both technology in the form of scanners and computers as well as technical assistance to be able to support programs and practitioners in accessing the state's online systems. So including the online applications for licensing, et cetera, as I mentioned previously. So we have, of course, ongoing work in revised and kind of new targets, I guess you could say, related to moving ahead. We would really like to continue to work on articulation.

This has been an area where we've made some improvements in the sense that we've been able to get specific courses to be articulated among the state's institutes of higher education, but not, at this time, full success in terms of kind of two plus two programs, associate's articulating into bachelor's degrees programs, so that's an ongoing goal. We also really would like to work on the development of additional credentials. One thing that's emerged most recently is a part of our early head start childhood partnership branch is that we need to have a state recognized infant/toddler credential, and so we're having discussions with the state about what that would look like and where that would be implemented. And then we're also taking a look at sustainability across the state, as well, as the grant winds down because the primary funder of a lot of the work that we've been doing, aside from the work that's going to live well beyond kind of the work that's been done, including the documents, alignments, et cetera, will be the state CCDF funding.

So I've included on this slide several resources that you might want to take a look at. One is the Exceed website as I mentioned before. This is kind of our core branding for our multiagency collaboration under Race to the Top. And all of the documents that I've mentioned today, there's links to the center, there's links to all of our competency documents. The Website is organized according to family professionals and programs. You can take a look there. Here's the center's Website, which is the second bullet. And then if you'd also like to take a look at our previously submitted APR, I've included a link to that, as well. Okay. Thank you.

Denise: Thank you so much, Allison. That was wonderful. So I think it's been really exciting to watch the chat box. We've had several resources shared. In the state of Washington, they're also working on a master's certificate in coaching and early learning. There was information shared about Colorado's nine credit coaching certificate, as well. And then I think just a really good back and forth, questions that we've been able to address throughout. However, we do have one specifically, Allison, for Rhode Island from Beth Barrett. "What has been the participation level in Rhode Island by the workforce in your registry? Are there incentives for registering, and how did you get professionals to participate?"

Allison: Sure. So there -- there's requirements for participation in the sense that if you participate in a program that is state funded, so any of our state-funded professional development, meaning our early learning and development standards training or if you're a state funded pre-k grantee, for example, then there's been a requirement of participation, and that's been something that we've closely monitored. We also will be having by the end of the grant a small raffle for folks who participated in technical assistance from the center in terms of getting their workforce registry accounts completed. So that's another incentive, as well. And we've really, honestly, working in collaboration with the center, we've done a road show in terms of going out and doing presentations. What we found was that as much as you would think, you know, doing a presentation and giving an overview would be beneficial, that really

didn't make a dent in terms of helping people to get in. It really has taken a lot of hand holding, a lot of folks going out to programs, making themselves available to meet with staff. We've done webinars, we've had FAQ sheets, but it's really, again, been that personal contact.

We... When we implemented our technology support grant in terms of being able to purchase computers and technologies essential to support implementation, we actually didn't receive as many applications for that funding as we had anticipated, which, I think, speaks to kind of the core subset of folks who hadn't previously applied for one of our quality improvement grants that we still needed to kind of reach in the last couple months of the grant. So it's really been a multipronged approach, and we have pretty good participation rates. It's -- It's been slowly ticking up. Although, what I can say related to that is we've really been trying to work to having a comprehensive and fully completed workforce registry. We saw initially that we had a lot of people that had logged in and had developed credentials, but they hadn't entered any information. So that's something that we're really working on now in the upcoming months so that we can have a really robust support.

Denise: Okay, great. Thank you so much for that answer. We did also note that we had a question in the chat box about federal guidance for a definition for teacher educator. I mean, we are not aware of any particular federal guidance in relation to that definition, but if anyone is aware of that, please share in the chat box. And I'm going to turn it over to Kathy now, who's going to prompt Kathleen with the questions for Colorado.

Kathy: Okay. Thanks, Denise. So thinking back to when Kathleen presented about Colorado, Rick Brandon had a question, Kathleen. "Is the credential mandatory, and for which positions?"

Kathleen: The credential is -- is a voluntary credential. That said, there are pieces of it that are highly incentivized. So, the credential works in a couple of different ways. First of all, there's a cross-walking in the credential into the requirements for early childhood licensing so that, for example, at a... If you have a level three early childhood credential, you can cross-walk into Colorado's rules and regulations as an early -- a qualified early childhood teacher. There's also a level for directors. And the QRIS system is set up in a block-and-point system, so the first two levels are at blocks, but the points system is where the credential is important. And programs get additional points based on the credentialing level of their staff. So they are incentivized to actually earn credentials at higher levels in order to earn higher levels of program quality.

Kathy: Okay. Thank you. And one more question. Albert Watt wants to know, "What do the points that feed into the early childhood professional credential mean for the professional?"

Kathleen: Well, I think I just answered that. It's... For the professional themselves, it's a cross-walking, and then they're incentivized through the QRIS system, as well. It's also interesting to see here in Colorado that people are -- they seem to be almost competitive about earning higher credential levels. One of the very common calls that our help desk gets is, "I'm two points away from the next credential level. Tell me what's the best thing to do so that I can get up to the next level." So it's fun to see that kind of interaction happening, as well. Kathy: Okay. Thanks. And you're right. You answered both questions with one answer. That was perfect. So now, I mentioned earlier that there's going to be a

document for "more information." And AEM are the folks who do the Early Learning Challenge Technical Assistance. And they're working on a document that will include all of these examples we've talked about today plus many more. And I know Pam, you men... We've heard about inclusion, other questions about wages, and any time we find examples from the APRs on any of these issues, we will include those in that document, as well. You can see what's new on the Early Learning Challenge GRADS360° Website. What's new on the left. When it is available, we will put it right there. And you'll see on the right about partway down, it talks about state T.A. resources, and it would also be in that particular place. And this is what it will look like.

The heading will look like... Oopsie. Sorry. The heading will look like this. It's called "State TA Resources: Transforming the Workforce" and so forth. So this is one place you can see it. I'm also sure that Allison will put it on the development teaching and learning Website. And it will probably be many places that you'll be able to find it. In addition, she had mentioned that this will be recorded and available, not only the slides, but the recording will be available. And I think she answered in the chat box that that would be available in the near future. And so since there aren't any more questions, we would just like to especially thank Kathleen and Allison for sharing, from Colorado and Rhode Island, all the information they had, but also to thank all of you for attending and for, as Denise mentioned earlier, sharing resources and so forth with one another.

I can see with the excitement of this topic we should probably do this again after we learn from the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge states that are still doing work this year. They will have another report next year that will be giving even additional successes and innovations related to the workforce, so I'm sure we will be in touch through the work with Development Teaching and Learning as well as ELC and much of the work that you're all connected with. So we thank you very much, and just happy you were with us.

Denise: Thank you, all. Have a great day. Goodbye.

[End video]